

Application No. 10/801,316

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*CLAIM AMENDMENTS*

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A chemical-mechanical polishing system comprising:
  - (a) an abrasive and/or polishing pad,
  - (b) boric acid, or a conjugate base thereof, and
  - (c) an aqueous carrier,

wherein the boric acid or ~~and~~ conjugate base thereof is ~~are~~ not present together in the polishing system in a sufficient amount to act as a pH buffer.

2. (Original) The chemical-mechanical polishing system of claim 1, wherein the abrasive is a metal oxide.

3. (Original) The chemical-mechanical polishing system of claim 2, wherein the abrasive is selected from the group consisting of alumina, silica, titania, ceria, zirconia, germania, magnesia, co-formed products thereof, and combinations thereof.

4. (Original) The chemical-mechanical polishing system of claim 3, wherein the abrasive is alumina or silica.

5. (Original) The chemical-mechanical polishing system of claim 1, wherein the abrasive is fixed on a polishing pad.

6. (Original) The chemical-mechanical polishing system of claim 1, wherein the abrasive is in particulate form and is suspended in the carrier.

7. (Original) The chemical-mechanical polishing system of claim 1, wherein the carrier is water.

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8. (Original) The chemical-mechanical polishing system of claim 1, wherein the system further comprises an oxidizing agent.

9. (Original) The chemical-mechanical polishing system of claim 8, wherein the oxidizing agent is a peroxide or persulfate.

10. (Original) The chemical-mechanical polishing system of claim 1, wherein the system further comprises a film-forming agent.

11. (Original) The chemical-mechanical polishing system of claim 10, wherein the film-forming agent is an azole.

12. (Original) The chemical-mechanical polishing system of claim 1, wherein the system comprises about 0.5 wt.% or more carrier-suspended abrasive particles, about 0.01 wt.% or more boric acid or conjugate base thereof, and water.

13. (Original) The chemical-mechanical polishing system of claim 1, wherein the system further comprises a complexing agent.

14.-33. (Canceled)

34. (Currently Amended) A method of polishing a substrate comprising:

(i) contacting a substrate with a chemical-mechanical polishing system comprising:

- (a) an abrasive and/or polishing pad,
- (b) boric acid, or conjugate base thereof, and
- (c) an aqueous carrier,

wherein the boric acid or and conjugate base thereof is ~~are~~ not present together in the polishing system in a sufficient amount to act as a pH buffer, and

(ii) abrading at least a portion of the substrate to polish the substrate.

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35. (Original) The method of claim 34, wherein the substrate comprises a metal oxide layer and a metal layer.

36. (Original) The method of claim 35, wherein the metal layer comprises copper, tungsten, tantalum, or titanium.

37.-44. (Canceled)